



@ms.jeffers

2017 Letter to Parents

# Welcome to Ms. Jeffers'

## 7th Grade Language Arts



Follow the QR code or go to [msjeffersclassroom.com](http://msjeffersclassroom.com).

★ Read ★ Click ★ Explore ★

HOW DOES THE WEBSITE  
HELP MY CHILD  
SUCCEED?

In the "7th Dailies" section, I summarize each day's class. I also upload any presentations, videos, handouts, homework, and other important documents. This can help you follow what's going on in class, help your child stay organized, and provide support. It also helps you child stay on top of things if he/she is absent, forgot something at school, or has a question.

Beyond this section, you'll also find a dropdown menu full of resources for your child. From vocabulary review to grammar practice to typing drills, there are many tools available to support your child and help them strengthen their reading and writing skills.

## Course Goals

### Writing Goals

While writing across genres, students will communicate clearly and organize effectively. They will master grammar and punctuation skills, expand their vocabulary, and write prolifically. Writing assignments will include an informational piece, a descriptive piece, a theme analysis, an argumentative letter, and more.

### IR Goals

Research has shown over and over again the benefit reading has on all academic performance, so independent reading (IR) is a cornerstone of the LA curriculum. Students will fall in love with reading for pleasure, read from a variety of genres, apply skills learned in class to their reading, and share their discoveries with their classmates.

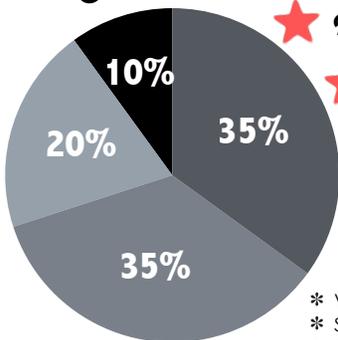
### Literature Goals

Students will read a variety of literature, both classic and contemporary, and work on digging deeper into a text, paying attention to the moves of the author in addition to the moves of characters. They will analyze for both theme and point of view, and they will learn how to support an analysis with cited evidence that is thoroughly explained.

### Speaking Goals

Students will end the year more confident and clear speakers. They will learn to organize the content of a speech and deliver the speech in an engaging way, incorporating movement and visual aids. Students will also refine their small and large group discussion skills, becoming more aware of how to be productive member of a group.

## Grade Breakdown



★ Reading 35% ★ Speaking 20%  
★ Writing 35% ★ Participation 10%

### Earning Participation

Each week your child will receive a participation grade. Half of that score is based on his/her ACTIVE participation and half is PASSIVE participation.

#### Active

- \* Volunteer answers
- \* Share during discussion
- \* Submit vocab words or share vocab sentences
- \* Share writing during W.O.W.
- \* Give extra book talk
- \* Submit LA in Action forms
- \* Submit writing prompts
- \* Go above and beyond!

#### Passive

- \* Come prepared with LA materials, writing utensil, and planner
- \* Be on task and working hard
- \* Conduct yourself in a respectful and helpful way
- \* Be an active listener
- \* Clean up after yourself
- \* Turn work in on time

## Supplies

1. red spiral notebook (not oversized)
2. 1.5-2" pocketed 3-ring red binder
3. 10 tabbed dividers for binder
4. loose-leaf paper to put in binder
5. 1 box of tissues, 1 box pencils, 1 pkg. 3x5 ruled note cards

#### ITEMS TO DONATE FOR SHARED CLASSROOM USE:

- boys A-K: pkg. highlighters
- boys L-Z: pkg. sticky notes
- girls A-K: pkg. dry erase markers
- girls L-Z: pkg. 8 1/2 x 11 colored card stock

\*It would be helpful for your child to have access to a pair of headphones or earbuds for classroom use.



## What is Ms. Jeffers' teaching philosophy?

*"I believe there lies great power in failure...  
...as long as you don't give up."*

I believe **we all can learn much more from our failures than we can from our successes**, and since school is all about learning, I expect **your child to learn from his/her failures**, struggles, and disappointments. **This means a grade in language arts is only final if your student want it to be.** Students are encouraged to redo or revise any assignment to improve their understanding and grade. This option is available until the grading period is over.

### ★ Homework

LA is two periods, so you can expect your child to generally have more LA homework than other subjects; however, I work hard to respect both the time of students and families outside of the school day. I know how busy everything gets, so please know there is purpose and thought behind every assignment expected to be completed outside of class.

Every night students will need to read their IR book for 25 minutes (a district expectation), and there will periodically be other homework to help prepare students for an upcoming activity or something a student wasn't able to complete in class. Please know **students are generally given multiple nights to complete any assignment**, and **due dates for projects are given weeks in advance with plenty of in-class work time.**

### ★ Who is Ms. Jeffers?

After growing up outside of Chicago, I graduated from Augustana College with a degree in English and Secondary Education as well as both Phi Beta Kappa and Summa Cum Laude honors. At that time, I moved to Togiak, Alaska, to teach at a Title 1 school in an Eskimo village! I taught there for three years before moving back to the contiguous states.

This is now my fifth year in the Pleasant Valley School District. The culture of learning here is spectacular, and the students have impressive work ethic and curiosity.

When I'm not teaching, I love reading, writing, spending time at my family's cottage in Whitehall, Michigan, training my dog to do sweet tricks, watching Packers games, cooking, playing games, and being outdoors.

### ★ Contacting Ms. Jeffers

**Email:** [jeffersheather@pleasval.k12.ia.us](mailto:jeffersheather@pleasval.k12.ia.us)

**Phone:** 563.332.0200

**Instagram:** @ms.jeffers

**Website:** [msjeffersclassroom.com](http://msjeffersclassroom.com)

### Key Classroom Policies and Expectations

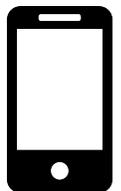
**Work hard. Be kind. Those are the expectations I communicate with students, and I hold them accountable to both. If there is ever a reason to keep your student after class, I will email home to inform you as to what happened, but these instances are rare. I also work hard to communicate your child's successes, so don't be afraid if you see an email from me pop up in your inbox. :)**



**If you ever have a question for me or would like clarification on something (I know how details can often get lost in translation), don't hesitate to contact me using the information provided below. I want us to work together to help your child reach his/her utmost potential. Likewise, if your student has a question or concern, please encourage him/her to first contact me themselves. I'm always happy to hear from them!**



**There will be many times during class where I invite students to use devices for different activities, assignments, and games. However, devices should remain away until instructed to take them out. If a device is out without instruction, even if just sitting on a desk, it will be confiscated and turned in to the office. If you need to contact your child during the school day, please call the office, and the office will deliver the message to the classroom.**



**If your child is absent, my website and the absent binder in the classroom are there to help. The expectation is he/she makes the effort to gather and complete any missing work. If questions remain, I'll be happy to help. While students have two days upon return to turn in work before it is deemed late, all missing work, even work as a result of an absence, will always be flagged in the grade book as a reminder for you both.**



**If a student turns in any assignment late, he/she is forfeiting the opportunity for the same timely feedback as the rest of the class. Late work is always the last thing I grade. Daily assignments not turned in on time will receive a failing grade. For major assignments, students will receive two grades: a grade for the assignment in the proper category and a pass/fail grade for turning it in on time in the participation category.**

